

Ana:

I am 27 and have a problem with my husband. He has been violent throughout our 7 year marriage. He uses his fists, but he only hits me in places that would be covered up by my clothes. I have never told anyone about the abuse. He tells me it is my fault because I disobey him, and sometimes I wonder if he is right.

We have a 7 year old son who is wonderful. My husband has been a good father to him and has never exhibited any violent or abusive behavior toward my son. My son has never seen his father hit me and has never seen my bruises.

Today, I got a protective order that puts my husband out of the house and orders him to stay away from me. The order gives him visits with my son because I insisted on it. My son would be crushed if he could not see his father.

I do have a problem I am very worried about. When my husband and I were dating, he was also abusive and very controlling. He forced me to sell my body to truckers at a motel about 60 miles outside of town. It was awful, and it went on for about 6 months. One time, one of the johns raped me. Shortly after that I became pregnant. Because of the pregnancy, my husband married me. My husband does not know about the rape. He ordered me to always use a condom with the johns and as far as he knows, I always did. My husband is certain that our son is his biological child.

I am not sure. My son looks a lot like me so that has not cleared up any questions about who his biological father might be. I do know that I don't want anyone, especially my son, to find out that I used to be a prostitute. I would never want my son to find out he is the son of a rapist john. If it came out that my son is not my husband's child, then he would be so angry he might hurt me and my son. Even if he didn't hurt us, he would never pay any more child support. Right now, I am dependent on him paying child support to be able to feed and care for my son.

If my information about my past gets out, then...